

ECONOMIC IMPACT OF SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CENTER

CONSULTING ACTIVITIES IN NEW YORK: 2004-2005

James J. Chrisman, Ph.D.

1121 Edinburgh Drive
Starkville, MS 39759

tel. 662-615-4373
jimkaren@bellsouth.net

University Address (Day)

Department of Management and Information Systems
College of Business and Industry
Mississippi State University
Mississippi State, MS 39762-9581

tel: 662-325-1991
fax: 662-325-8651
jchrisman@cobilan.msstate.edu

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report analyzes the sales and employment changes and financing obtained by a sample of established businesses and pre-ventures (persons aspiring to start a business) that received five or more hours of consulting assistance (long-term clients) from the New York Small Business Development Center (SBDC) in 2004.

There were 1,405 responses to two mailings of a questionnaire, a 15 percent response rate. The clients surveyed (9,368) represent 62.5 percent of the entire population of long-term clients (received five hours or more of consulting) of the New York SBDC in 2004. Tests indicated that the sample was large enough to obtain statistically reliable estimates, there were no differences in early or late respondents on the performance indicators analyzed that suggested an overestimation of economic impact, and the responses provided were reliable.

The sales and employment changes of the sample in 2005 (the year after receiving assistance) were compared to the average change in sales and employment of all businesses in New York. The incremental improvement in the sample's performance, above the performance of the average New York business, was extrapolated across the entire long-term client population to estimate the tax revenues generated through SBDC consulting. To be conservative, only clients who indicated that the SBDC's services were beneficial were used. The tax revenues generated by long-term clients were compared to the total cost of the New York SBDC. Established business clients were also asked to estimate jobs and revenues saved due to the consulting services provided by the SBDC.

To gain additional insights into the value of the services offered by the New York SBDC clients were asked to indicate the amount of financing obtained as a direct result of SBDC assistance.

The New York SBDC assisted 14,984 long-term clients during 2004. Of these, 4,226 were established businesses and 10,758 were pre-ventures. Questionnaires were sent to the 9,368 clients for whom the SBDC still had valid mailing addresses. Approximately 84 percent of the respondents said that the services received were beneficial. In aggregate, we estimate that the long-term clients of the New York SBDC generated \$2.97 billion in incremental sales and 14,345 new jobs because of SBDC consulting assistance (see Table 1). We also estimate that \$829.7 million in sales and 8,579 jobs were saved due to the consulting.¹

The incremental performance of established business clients yielded \$19.9 million in tax revenues; another \$129.9 million in tax revenues were gained from pre-venture clients who started new businesses. The total amounted to \$149.8 million in tax revenues, of which approximately \$103.6 million went to the state and \$46.2 million went to the federal government.

Compared to the total cost of operating the SBDC (\$12.4 million), the consulting provided to both established business and pre-venture clients generated \$12.10 in tax revenues in one year for every \$1 spent on the entire program. The average cost of each new job generated was \$863.

Furthermore, an estimated \$719.8 million in financing was obtained by clients as a result of the consulting received. This figure suggests that every dollar expended on the SBDC operation was leveraged by approximately \$58.16 in new capital raised from external sources.

¹ Revenues retained and jobs saved were not figured into the benefit to cost estimates.

TABLE 1
ESTIMATED IMPACT OF SBDC CONSULTING

	Established Firms (N = 4226)	Pre-Ventures (N = 10758)	All Firms (N = 14984)
Aggregate sales impact	\$354,294,300	\$2,611,246,300	\$2,965,540,600
Aggregate employment impact	2183 new jobs	12162 new jobs	14345 new jobs
Existing revenues maintained	\$829,749,700		
Existing jobs saved	8579 jobs saved		
<hr/>			
State tax revenues generated	\$12,853,460	\$ 90,730,390	\$103,583,850
Federal tax revenues generated	<u>\$ 7,031,930</u>	<u>\$ 39,173,540</u>	<u>\$ 46,205,470</u>
Total tax revenues generated	\$19,885,390	\$129,903,930	\$149,789,320
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Cost of entire SBDC operation			\$12,377,283
Benefit to cost ratio	1.61/1.00	10.50/1.00	12.10/1.00
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Cost per job			\$863
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Cost of all consulting			\$11,387,100
Benefit to cost ratio	1.75/1.00	11.41/1.00	13.15/1.00
<hr/>			
Cost of long-term consulting	\$2,869,549	\$4,554,840	\$7,424,389
Benefit to cost ratio	6.93/1.00	28.52/1.00	20.18/1.00
<hr/>			
SBA financing	\$ 91,904,940	\$165,949,030	\$257,853,970
Debt financing	\$107,034,010	\$242,783,100	\$349,817,110
Equity financing	<u>\$ 58,236,390</u>	<u>\$ 53,895,000</u>	<u>\$112,131,390</u>
Total financing	\$257,175,340	\$462,627,130	\$719,802,470
Financing Leverage	20.78/1.00	37.38/1.00	58.16/1.00

INTRODUCTION

This report describes the results of a study designed to assess the economic impact of the long-term consulting activities of the New York Small Business Development Center (SBDC) program in 2004. Long-term clients are those who received a minimum of five hours of consulting assistance from the SBDC. The economic impact of consulting activities was analyzed by comparing clients' sales and employment changes between 2004 and 2005 with the average changes for all New York businesses during this time period. The growth in sales and employment in excess of statewide averages was used to calculate the incremental federal and state tax revenues generated the year after consulting assistance was provided. The tax revenues generated by SBDC-assisted clients were then compared to the cost of the service to determine if it was cost effective.

To supplement the analysis, clients were also asked to estimate the jobs and revenues saved as a consequence of the consulting received. In addition, clients were asked to indicate the amount of debt and equity financing they were able to obtain as a result of the consulting received from the SBDC.

The remainder of this report describes the methodology and results of the study.

THE STUDY

In 2004 the New York SBDC provided long-term consulting assistance to 14,984 clients. Of these, 4,226 owned established small businesses and 10,758 were seeking to start new businesses (pre-ventures). A mail questionnaire was sent to the 9,368 long-term clients for whom the SBDC still had valid mailing addresses in 2006. A total of 1,405 clients returned questionnaires. This represented a 15.0 percent response rate.²

² Not all of the respondents provided usable responses to every question; therefore, the effective sample sizes for the analyses may vary.

SAMPLE SIZE

To determine if the number of responses received were statistically reliable, the following formula was used:

$$Z = [nNE^2 / (Ns^2 - ns^2)]^{1/2}$$

where: n = actual sample size (1405).
N = size of population (14984).
s = standard deviation of the population (standardized value = 1).
Z = confidence interval for the mean.
E = amount of error in the mean to be tolerated (10% of s).

With a sample size of 1,405 and a tolerated error of 0.1 of a standard deviation, the confidence interval of the mean was 99.9 percent. In other words, we were 99.9 percent confident that our sample means were no more than one-tenth of one standard deviation from the population means.

SAMPLE VALIDATION

Statistical tests were conducted to ensure that there was a minimum likelihood of response bias and that the responses to the questionnaire were reliable. The following procedures were used.

Response Bias. Two mailings of the questionnaire were conducted. T-tests between respondents to the first and second mailings provided no evidence of response bias for pre-venture clients along the following dimensions: number of employees, sales revenues, financing obtained, or the evaluation of the benefits of the SBDC's services. Early and late established business respondents provided statistically equal responses on all measures except the reported number of employees in 2005; late respondents indicated a higher number of employees than early respondents. However, since late responders could be expected to be more similar to nonrespondents than early responders are, we conclude that there is no evidence of an upward bias on the performance data provided by respondents.

Reliability. The reliability of the questionnaire was assessed by a correlation analysis comparing clients' perceptions of whether the SBDC's services were beneficial and their evaluations of (1) the quality of their

consultants, and (2) their willingness to recommend the SBDC to others. The results of the correlation analyses were statistically significant at the .01 level for both pre-ventures and established business clients.

DATA ANALYSIS METHODS: ESTABLISHED BUSINESSES

The changes in sales and employment for the period before and after consulting was received were calculated for businesses receiving at least five hours of assistance. Two part-time employees were considered equivalent to one full-time employee.

The rate of growth in sales and employment for established clients was compared with the average growth of all businesses in New York. The difference between the growth rate of clients' businesses and that of businesses in the state was used to estimate the incremental or marginal changes in the sales and employment of the sample. To be conservative, we chose not to impute impact to clients who did not believe they received value from the SBDC. Thus, only those who indicated that its services were beneficial were used to calculate incremental growth rates.

The incremental growth rates were multiplied by the average sales and employment of the respondents for the year consulting was received.³ The incremental change in sales was then multiplied by the state sales tax rate. The state sales tax rate was reduced by 25 percent to reflect the fact that some businesses do not directly pay sales taxes. This adjustment was arbitrary and may still overestimate taxes paid on sales. However, it compensates for the fact that businesses are taxed in ways not measured in this study (e.g., corporate income tax rates, property taxes, etc.).

The incremental change in employment was multiplied by the median state and federal income taxes paid per return for the state of New York. Federal income tax data were obtained from Table 2 of the SOI Bulletin published by the

³ Comparative data on sales were obtained from the Bureau of Economic Analysis database. Comparative data on employment were obtained from the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

IRS (Spring, 2006). Tax data for 2004, the most recent figure available, was used. Income taxes paid per return for persons of median incomes were used rather than average income taxes for all returns. This was done to better reflect the types of employment opportunities offered by responding small business owners. This again represents a conservative adjustment to the data.

The New York SBDC supplied information on average state income taxes paid per return for 2003, the most recent year available. Since the median federal income tax paid per return for New York residents was less than the average, the average state income tax paid per return was adjusted accordingly to approximate the median amount paid.

Adjusted sales tax rates and median state personal income tax payments were multiplied by the average incremental improvement in sales and employment, respectively, to arrive at the state value added figures. Median federal personal income tax paid per return was also multiplied by the average incremental improvement in employment. All these numbers were then multiplied by the total number of established business clients, adjusted for the proportion of the respondents who indicated the SBDC's services were beneficial. The formula for the calculations can be expressed as follows:

$$\begin{array}{l} \text{Average} \\ \text{Incremental} \\ \text{Growth} \end{array} \times \begin{array}{l} \text{Tax Rate} \\ \\ \end{array} \times \begin{array}{l} \text{Proportion of Clients} \\ \text{Satisfied w/Service} \end{array} \times \begin{array}{l} \text{Total Number} \\ \text{of Clients} \end{array} = \begin{array}{l} \text{Total Tax} \\ \text{Revenues} \end{array}$$

DATA ANALYSIS METHODS: PRE-VENTURE CLIENTS

Similar procedures were used for long-term pre-venture clients, with the following exceptions. First, since pre-ventures start with no sales or employees, it is impossible to calculate a rate of growth. Thus, raw averages were used to assess economic impact. Second, the averages were adjusted to account for the total number of pre-venture clients who failed or did not start a business. This adjustment was made as follows:

$$\text{Average Performance} = AS \times (NS/NP)$$

where: AS = average performance (sales and employment) of successful pre-ventures
NS = number of successful pre-ventures
NP = number of pre-ventures (successful + unsuccessful)

Once this adjustment was made, the sales and employment growth of pre-venture respondents was multiplied by the corresponding tax rates, the proportion of pre-ventures who judged the SBDC's services to be beneficial, and the total estimated number of pre-venture clients. This formula is shown below.

Average X Tax X Proportion of Clients X Total = Total Tax
Performance Rate Satisfied w/Service Clients Revenues

BENEFIT TO COST OF SBDC SERVICES

The benefit of the services provided by the SBDC was divided by the total cost of providing the services to arrive at a benefit-to-cost ratio. The SBDC's total operating budget was used for this calculation. This was a conservative approach since only part of the SBDC's' budget was spent on consulting assistance. Thus, to obtain further insights we also compared the tax revenues generated by clients with the cost of consulting activities both in total and for long-term established and pre-venture clients separately. The cost of long-term consulting was estimated based on the proportion of the total consulting hours devoted to those clients, per data supplied by the SBDC.

OTHER ANALYSES

Quality of Consulting Services. Clients were asked whether the services provided by the SBDC were beneficial. This question was used to determine whether clients' performance improvements were affected by SBDC consulting. As noted above, the performance improvements of responding clients were adjusted to account for the proportion that believed the SBDC's services were beneficial when extrapolating the results to the full population of clients.

Clients were also asked to assess the knowledge and expertise of consultants assigned to their cases as well as their working relationship with the consultants. Clients evaluated their consultant's knowledge/expertise and

working relationship on a five-point scale: (1) poor, (2) below average, (3) average, (4) above average, and (5) excellent. These questions provide further evidence of the quality of the consulting services. In the main, however, these questions were used to assess the reliability of the question concerning whether the SBDC's services were beneficial.

Revenue and Job Retention. Established business clients were asked to estimate the number of full- and part-time jobs that were saved as a result of the assistance received from the SBDC. We also asked clients to estimate the amount of previous sales revenue maintained as a result of SBDC assistance. The average responses were then extrapolated to the population of established business clients.

Financing. Established business and pre-venture clients were also asked to estimate the amounts of SBA guaranteed loans, other loans, and equity financing obtained directly as a consequence of SBDC consulting activities. To remain conservative, only those clients who indicated that the SBDC assisted them prepare to obtain financing were used for this analysis. Extrapolation to the entire client population was made after adjusting for the proportion of clients who indicated the SBDC assisted them raise capital.

RESULTS

The results of the analysis of the consulting services provided by the New York SBDC to established business and pre-venture clients are presented below.

ESTABLISHED BUSINESSES

Quality of Consulting. Of those who provided usable responses to the service evaluation question, 82 percent indicated that the SBDC's services were beneficial. Furthermore, clients gave a rating of 4.11 out of a possible 5.00 on the knowledge and expertise of their consultants and a rating of 4.14 on their working relationship with the consultants (scores of 3 indicated an average rating, scores of 4 indicated an above average rating, and scores of 5

indicated an excellent rating). Finally, 91 percent of the responding established business clients indicated that they would recommend the SBDC's services to others.

Economic Impact Estimates. Table 2 compares the 2004 and 2005 sales and employment levels of established small business clients. Table 3 compares the SBDC clients' growth in sales and employment between 2004 and 2005 with the growth experienced by the average business in New York. As these Tables show, SBDC clients had an average increase in sales of \$153,006. In percentage terms this increase was larger than the increase experienced by the average New York business (19.0% versus 6.3%). There was also an increase in the number of individuals employed by clients in 2005 compared to 2004 (6.53 versus 5.82). Employment levels of established clients increased by 12.2 percent compared to an average 1.4 percent increase in employment for New York businesses.

The overall impact estimate for established business clients suggests that the SBDC's services led to a tax contribution of approximately \$19.9 million. This broke down as a contribution of approximately \$12.9 million to the state government and \$7.0 million to the federal government (See Table 4).

As shown in Table 5, these tax revenues were 61 percent greater than the SBDC's total operating budget, 75 percent greater than its consulting budget, and 6.93 times greater than the amount spent on long-term established clients.

Revenue and Job Retention. To supplement the impact estimates we also asked established clients if the SBDC helped them save jobs and retain existing revenues. On average, clients estimated that the SBDC program was responsible for saving \$196,344 in revenues and 2.03 full-time equivalent jobs. In total, this amounted to \$829.7 million in revenues retained and 8,579 jobs saved.⁴

Financing Obtained. According to the respondents, 25 percent of established business clients were assisted in preparing to seek financing.

⁴ It should be noted that revenues retained and jobs saved were not figured into the benefit to cost estimates.

Those clients obtained an average of \$243,422 in capital, of which \$86,990 came from SBA loans, \$101,310 came from other forms of debt financing, and \$55,122 came from equity financing. Extrapolations indicate that \$91.9 million in SBA loans, \$107.0 million in other debt financing, and \$58.2 million in equity financing (\$257.2 million in total) was raised by clients with the help of the SBDC.⁵ This suggests that the total expenditure of tax dollars on the SBDC were leveraged by public and private financing at a ratio of 20.78 to 1.00 for long-term established business clients alone.

PRE-VENTURE CLIENTS

Perceptions of the Quality of Consulting. Of the pre-venture clients who provided an evaluation of the SBDC's services, 85 percent felt the consulting was beneficial. In addition, clients gave a rating of 4.08 out of a possible 5.00 on their consultants' knowledge and expertise, and a rating of 4.06 on their working relationship with the consultants (scores of 3 indicated an average rating, scores of 4 indicated an above average rating, and scores of 5 indicated an excellent rating). Moreover, 91 percent of the responding pre-venture clients indicated that they would recommend the SBDC's services to other entrepreneurs.

Economic Impact Estimates. After adjusting for unsuccessful clients, we calculated that an average of \$285,560 in new sales and 1.33 new jobs were created per pre-venture client. As Table 6 shows, these new ventures generated tax payments of \$129.9 million (\$90.7 million to the state and \$39.2 million to the federal government).

When compared to the cost of the entire SBDC operation, the tax revenues from pre-venture clients generated \$10.50 for every dollar expended. Furthermore, the tax revenues generated were 11.41 times greater than the cost

⁵ Our estimates suggest that of 4,226 established business clients, 474 received SBA loans as a consequence of SBDC long-term consulting. Furthermore, 510 clients received other loans, and 158 received equity financing.

of the SBDC's consulting activities. Finally, the tax revenues from pre-venture clients were 28.52 times greater than the amount expended on pre-venture who received long-term consulting (see Table 7).⁶

Financing Obtained. According to the responses, 18 percent of all pre-venture clients received assistance from the SBDC in preparing to obtain financing. The average raised was \$85,698 in SBA loans, \$125,376 in other sources of debt financing, and \$27,832 in equity financing for a total of \$238,906. Extrapolating to the population suggests that a total of \$165.9 million in financing from SBA loans, \$242.8 million from other sources of debt, and \$53.9 million in financing from equity investors was raised.⁷ The grand total of approximately \$462.6 million suggests that each tax dollar expended on the SBDC was leveraged by \$37.38 in public and private financing for new ventures.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Results of this study suggest that the New York SBDC makes an important contribution to the economic development of the State of New York. Our analysis indicated that SBDC clients added \$2.97 billion in incremental sales and 14,345 new jobs to the state. The latter number suggests that the cost of generating a new job through investment in the New York SBDC was \$862 per job. Furthermore, an additional \$829.7 million in sales and 8,579 jobs were saved because of the SBDC's interventions.

Estimates suggest that the one-year tax benefits accruing as a consequence of the performance improvements of SBDC-assisted clients generated a return of \$12.10 for every dollar spent on the entire SBDC operation in New

⁶ Pre-ventures had no sales or employees at the time the consulting was received. Therefore, we did not attempt to measure revenue or job retention.

⁷ Our estimates suggest that of 10,758 pre-venture clients 902 received SBA loans as a consequence of SBDC long-term consulting. We also estimate that 769 clients received other loans and 340 received equity financing.

York. Furthermore, when compared to the cost of long-term consulting our estimates indicate that \$20.18 was returned for each dollar expended.

Finally, we estimate that \$719.8 million in capital was raised by clients as a direct result of the assistance of the SBDC. This suggests that each dollar expended on the New York SBDC program was later leveraged by approximately \$58.16 in debt and equity capital. From all these analyses, we conclude that the New York SBDC is both effective and efficient in the discharge of its charter.

The numbers presented in this report are only estimates based on responses to a questionnaire. It is possible that the respondents were not representative of the population of clients, that factors such as social desirability bias may have inflated the estimates, or that SBDC clients tend to exceed the sales and employment growth rates of "average" businesses in the state for reasons unrelated to the consulting provided. It is also possible that some of the gains of the clients were not net gains to the economy.

While impact methodologies are always susceptible to such problems the tests conducted for bias and reliability suggest that the results are accurate enough to conclude that the SBDC program in New York makes a positive contribution to the economy. Furthermore, the results must be viewed in light of the fact that they are net of all the conservative downward adjustments in performance described earlier in this report. Thus, the estimates reported herein do not consider the impact of other SBDC services, the continuing tax revenues generated by long-term clients after the year of analysis, the many failures avoided through SBDC assistance, the unviable business ideas it discouraged, nor the jobs and revenues saved. Other tax revenue sources such as corporate taxes, property taxes, unemployment taxes, social security payments, and so on are also not included in the analysis.

From a public policy standpoint, the implication of this research is that the SBDC makes a contribution to the economies of New York and U.S. By

assisting established small businesses improve their operations and raise capital the New York SBDC contributes to the more efficient allocation and utilization of resources. Furthermore, these small firms provide employment opportunities for the citizens of New York. The SBDC also plays an important role in fostering entrepreneurship through the assistance it provides to pre-venture clients. Those clients add to the economic development of New York and the United States and, not incidentally, generate a large number of new jobs. Because the SBDC provides assistance to small business people and would-be entrepreneurs who often cannot afford the luxury and expense of a private consultant, its contributions become even more important. The evidence that its assistance returns tax revenues to state and federal governments, and value and capital to its clients that are greater than the direct cost of providing the services makes the existence of the New York SBDC program justifiable from a public policy perspective.

TABLE 2
2004-2005 AVERAGE EMPLOYMENT OF ESTABLISHED CLIENTS
WHO INDICATED THAT SBDC ASSISTANCE WAS VALUABLE

	2004	2005	Change
Sales	\$805,043	\$958,049	+\$153,006
Employment	5.82	6.53	+ 0.71

TABLE 3
CHANGES IN EMPLOYMENT BETWEEN 2004-2005: SBDC ESTABLISHED
BUSINESS CLIENTS VERSUS AVERAGE STATE BUSINESS

	Average % change in small business sample	Average % change all firms in state	Average incremental change in small business sample	
			percent	aggregate
Sales	+19.0%	+ 6.3%	+12.7%	+\$102,240
Employment	+12.2%	+ 1.4%	+10.8%	+0.63 jobs

TABLE 4
INCREMENTAL TAX REVENUES ADDED TO STATE AND FEDERAL GOVERNMENTS
AS A RESULT OF SBDC CONSULTING OF ESTABLISHED BUSINESS CLIENTS

STATE TAX REVENUES

	Tax	X	Tax	X	% Clients	X	# of Long	=	Total Tax
	Base		Rate		Valuing		Term Clients		Revenues
					Service				Generated
Sales	102,240		.03*		.82		4226		\$10,628,830
Employment	0.63		\$1019**		.82		4226		<u>\$ 2,224,630</u>
									\$12,853,460

FEDERAL TAX REVENUES

Employment	0.63		\$3221***		.82		4226		<u>\$ 7,031,930</u>
TOTAL INCREMENTAL STATE AND FEDERAL TAX REVENUES									\$19,885,390

* Figure represents 75 percent of state sales tax rate (4%) in 2005.

** Figure represents average state income tax paid per return by persons of median incomes in 2003.

*** Figure represents average federal income tax paid per return by persons of median incomes in New York in 2004.

TABLE 5
THE COSTS AND BENEFITS OF SBDC CONSULTING: ESTABLISHED BUSINESSES

Total incremental State and Federal Tax Revenues Added by Established Business Clients	\$19,885,390
Cost of operating the SBDC	\$12,377,283
Benefit to cost ratio	1.61/1.00
Cost of all consulting *	\$11,387,100
Benefit to cost ratio	1.75/1.00
Cost of long-term consulting provided to established business clients **	\$2,869,549
Benefit to cost ratio	6.93/1.00

* Approximately 92 percent of the total SBDC budget was used for consulting long- and short-term clients.

** Established business clients who received long-term consulting accounted for approximately 25.2 percent of the total consulting budget.

TABLE 6
INCREMENTAL TAX REVENUES ADDED TO STATE AND FEDERAL
GOVERNMENTS AS A RESULT OF SBDC CONSULTING OF PRE-VENTURE CLIENTS

STATE TAX REVENUES

	Tax	X	Tax	X	% Clients	X	# of Long	=	Total Tax
	Base		Rate		Valuing		Term Clients		Revenues
					Service				Generated
Sales	285,560		.03*		.85		10758		\$ 78,337,390
Employment	1.33		\$1019**		.85		10758		<u>\$ 12,393,000</u>
									\$ 90,730,390

FEDERAL TAX REVENUES

Employment	1.33		\$3221***		.85		10758		<u>\$ 39,173,540</u>
TOTAL INCREMENTAL STATE AND FEDERAL TAX REVENUES									\$129,903,930

* Figure represents 75 percent of state sales tax rate (4%) in 2005.

** Figure represents average state income tax paid per return by persons of median incomes in 2003.

*** Figure represents average federal income tax paid per return by persons of median incomes in New York in 2004.

TABLE 7
THE COSTS AND BENEFITS OF SBDC CONSULTING: PRE-VENTURES

Total incremental State and Federal Tax Revenues Added by Pre-Venture Clients	\$129,903,930
Cost of operating the SBDC	\$12,377,283
Benefit to cost ratio	10.50/1.00
Cost of all consulting *	\$11,387,100
Benefit to cost ratio	11.41/1.00
Cost of long-term consulting provided to pre-venture clients **	\$4,554,840
Benefit to cost ratio	28.52/1.00

* Approximately 92 percent of the total SBDC budget was used for consulting long and short term clients.

** Pre-venture clients who received long-term consulting accounted for approximately 40 percent of the total consulting budget.